

*Public Relations* 2A  
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SECOM-D-17  
26 November 1974

MEMORANDUM FOR: [REDACTED]

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Coordination Staff

SUBJECT : Ms. Emily S. Sheketoff  
Murphy Commission

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1. Through coordination with you, Ms. Sheketoff, at her request, met with [REDACTED] Executive Secretary of the Security Committee, and myself today. She advised that she had been commissioned to do a study on Executive Order 11652 to include its value, how it works and any problems connected with implementing it and was also to include in her study consideration of the Freedom of Information Act of 1967 and recent amendments.

2. With regard to E.O. 11652 Ms. Sheketoff asked if it was felt in the intelligence community that such a system of classification was needed and we advised that it was. It was pointed out to her that to be effective intelligence information had to be protected and that to continue to obtain intelligence information it was necessary to adequately protect the sources and methods that produced the intelligence. She asked regarding problems in implementing it and it was explained to her that members of the intelligence community have a good concept of the value of intelligence, how it is obtained, and are security conscious for the most part in protecting the information they are entrusted with.

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3. Ms. Shetetoff asked about authorization to classify and [REDACTED] explained generally how the authority was granted within CIA and we also advised that all members of the intelligence community do designate those individuals who are authorized to classify material and at what levels. She asked if there were disagreements with regard to classification. She was advised that in some cases this would occur but that such disagreements could be decided and

hopefully with due regard to prevent overclassification and yet protect sensitive sources and methods. It was mentioned that it is recognized in some quarters it is felt that there is a great tendency to overclassify to protect errors, but it was mentioned that in many cases the intelligence community has great success which did reflect most credibly upon the community but there is a complete realization within the community of the value of their sources and, therefore, the sensitive information is properly protected.

4. With regard to downgrading of information Ms. Sheketoff asked if there was a conscious effort in the intelligence community to downgrade information when the sensitivity had decreased and she was advised that members were aware of their responsibility in this regard. It was pointed out, however, that many times, while material could be downgraded, there was a question remaining as to whether complete declassification would not be harmful to continuing programs or sources. She was advised, however, that much information is being continually downgraded and declassified.

5. Ms. Sheketoff asked if members of the intelligence community explained to the necessary personnel its application at the time it was issued and [redacted] advised her of the general instructions issued within CIA as well as the fact that it was discussed from its issuance during indoctrination of new members and that this is a continuing process. Further within the intelligence community the individual departments and agencies continually review their classification procedures.

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6. Concerning the Freedom of Information Act, Ms. Sheketoff inquired if the Act itself caused a problem for the individual agencies and she asked what effect the recent amendments would have. She was advised that most, if not all, agencies within the intelligence community had specific offices or personnel to handle FOI inquiries and that they called upon other members of the agencies and departments as necessary. I did say that I thought FOI inquiries in many instances took a considerable time and effort and that I felt the recent amendments would bring an additional

burden on the various agencies. It was explained that the request in many instances required rather detailed reviews of documents and in many cases presented rather complex problems which would be most difficult to answer within the short period of time indicated under the recent amendments.

7. Ms. Sheketoff asked if it was believed that the current system of classifying would be improved upon if a new order or new legislation was passed which only provided for one classification, namely, Classified or Unclassified. I told her that this would not seem to me to adequately address a problem and I pointed out that there is a great difference in degrees of sensitivity in intelligence information. I used as an example the situation

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information does not need to be protected to any such degree. In summary, I advised that a program of just classified or unclassified information would not appear to me to fully address the problem.

8. Ms. Sheketoff asked if there was any legislation on the books now that should be repealed or if there was any new legislation which might be suggested which would assist the intelligence community. She was referred to legislation proposed by Mr. Colby which has not yet been introduced in Congress but which would hopefully prevent disclosure by individuals who obtained classified information as a result of their employment within the intelligence community.

9. During our conversation several questions came up with regard to CIA's dealing with Congress and with CIA's disclosure

to various Congressional committees and, since Ms. Sheketoff was to meet with Mr. George Cary, Legislative Counsel, it was suggested that these be taken up with him. It was also suggested that Ms. Sheketoff discuss further with Mr. Cary the legislation proposed by Mr. Colby.



Chairman  
Security Committee

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